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The Centenary of Lincoln's Birth

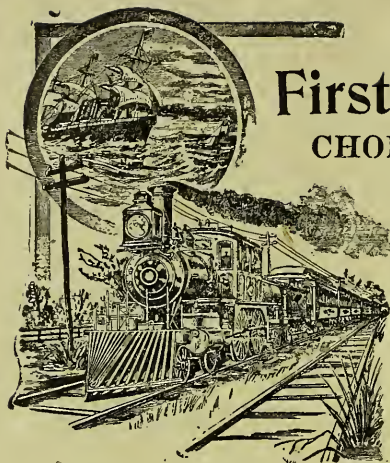
The Great White Plague

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The Centenary of Lincoln's Birth.

A DISCOURSE, AT TEMPLE KENESETH ISRAEL,

BY

RABBI JOSEPH KRAUSKOPF, D. D.

Philadelphia, February 14th, 1909.

Centenaries of great men's births have been observed before, but few have been marked with such spirit of appreciation as that which characterizes our Nation's celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln. The memory of many of our Presidents is held in reverence, but not one of them is so sacredly enshrined in the hearts of the American people as is that of the first of our martyr-presidents.

Centenary of
Lincoln enthusias-
tically observed.

Why this greater fondness of Abraham Lincoln? Is it because of his martyrdom? Garfield and McKinley, too, died the death of martyrs. Is it because he raised himself, by dint of personal effort and merit, from the lowliest of the earth to the position of chief executive of our Nation? The same is true of the Presidents I have named, and of a number of others. Is it because his efforts and successes redounded to the glory of our Nation? The same distinction is readily conceded to Washington and Grant.

Why greater rever-
ence shown to his
memory?

The factors which I have named unquestionably contribute greatly to the wonderful hold Abraham Lincoln has on the affection of the American people, notwithstanding more than two score years have passed

Had a sacred mis-
sion.

since the assassin's hand ended his illustrious career. But, there was another distinction which he possessed over and above any of the presidents that preceded and succeeded him, to which, it seems to me, may be traced the secret of his ever increasing popularity.

Like unto Moses of old, like unto other prophets of ancient and modern times, he was a man who entered life with a sacred mission; his very birth seemed a divine call, a call that out-sounded every other sound, that forced him out of the obscure into the light, that lifted him from the log-cabin in the wilds of Kentucky to the Capitol of the Nation. Other men sought the presidency; the presidency sought him. Politicians timbered the platforms for other presidents; he timbered his own, and at a time when no thought was further removed from his mind than that of being President of the United States. Other men saw glory and honor in the presidency; he saw but suffering and martyrdom, and yet obeyed the call.

Abraham Lincoln was President by choice of Providence, not by choice of men. Providence called him because it needed him, because it recognized in him a fitness for the solution of the pending crisis such as it had recognized in no other man.

Was the choice of Providence, not of men.

Other men had foreseen that crisis, some as much as a century earlier. Others had, long before, recognized its menace of severing the Union, and of precipitating the people into one of the bloodiest of civil wars. But, though they had vision, they lacked courage. Long before him, Patrick Henry had said "The slave question gives a gloomy prospect to future times," and George Mason, the friend of Washington, had written to the legislature of Virginia concerning the suffrance of slavery: "The laws of impartial Providence may avenge our injustice upon our posterity;" and Jefferson had said "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, and that His

Others saw the crisis but feared to stem it.

justice cannot sleep forever;" and Madison had said "Where slavery exists there the republican theory becomes fallacious."

They saw the flood of evil pouring in upon the Nation, but they stemmed it not. There was fear and compromise, vacillation and irresoluteness, at a time when the need was great for a brave heart and a firm hand and an heroic will to do the right. Had the issue been squarely met a century or half a century earlier, had the voice of God instead of that of politics been obeyed, had a Lincoln been in the presidential chair, or high in the Councils of the Nation, there would have been no civil war, no ravaged states, no devastated homes, no loss of hundreds of thousands of human lives.

He risked his all
for the sake of
right.

The difference between Lincoln and others lay in this: Others dared not risk their political future, he dared to risk even his life. He saw clearly that slavery was wrong, that it violated the Declaration of Independence, that, under the stars and stripes, the black man was as much entitled to his rights as was the white man, that, as long as slavery was fostered in some of our states and abhorred in others, enduring peace between them was impossible, secession was sure to result, and secession could not but mean endless warfare between the severed parts.

There was, therefore, but one thing to do, to tear out the evil, root and all, albeit that, through too long suffrance of it, could no longer be done without the aid of the sword, yea, no longer without the sacrifice of his life. It was in our old Independence Hall where he solemnly declared that he believed in the Declaration of Independence, because of its guarantee of liberty to all. "If our country cannot be saved," said he, "without giving up that principle, I would rather be assassinated on the spot than surrender it."

And well did he see to it that the country did not surrender its principle. And dearly did he pay for it. That of

The nation grate-
fully cherishes his
memory

which he had had a presentiment when he spoke in our city came to pass. The assassin's hand did strike him down, but not till, by his labors and sufferings, liberty was born anew unto his people, not till our Union was saved, not till the stars and stripes waved again over a Nation united and in peace.

The turf has grown thick upon the graves of those who with their blood wiped out the stain on their country's escutcheon. The bitter enmities of half a century ago are forgotten. But not forgotten is the name of Abraham Lincoln. Not forgotten is the sacrifice of martyrdom which he laid upon the altar of his country. The Nation's wide-spread and fervent celebration of the centenary of his birth is its strongest testimony that of all its revered Presidents none is more honored, more loved, more profoundly appreciated. Not an American heart anywhere to-day but beats with pride at the mere mention of the name of Abraham Lincoln. Not an American heart but resolves anew, on this centenary celebration of his birth, that as long as the Atlantic and Pacific oceans shall beat against our shores, as long as the Alleghenies and the Rocky Mountains shall lift their heads into the blue empyrean, as long as proud Old Glory shall wave from northern pine to southern palmetto so long shall the name of Abraham Lincoln live, honored and revered, as the self-chosen martyr, as the emancipator of the oppressed, as the savior of the Union.

The Great White Plague.

A DISCOURSE, AT TEMPLE KENESETH ISRAEL,

BY

RABBI JOSEPH KRAUSKOPF, D. D.

Philadelphia, February 21st, 1909.

Of international exhibitions, both general and specific, we have had a considerable number in late years. Each of them made it its special object to exhibit the latest triumphs of the arts, sciences and inventions. Each of them filled the spectator with admiration over the marvellous progress made in labor-saving and comfort-increasing devices.

The pleasure of
some exhibitions.

Not so the *International Tuberculosis Exhibition* that is now being held in the city of Philadelphia. We feel inexpressibly sad as we pass from exhibit to exhibit, as we witness the havocs wrought by "The Great White Plague," as we read the statistics telling of the countless millions of human beings that have fallen prey to this insatiable monster. In the same degree as we are uplifted by other exhibitions, we are depressed by this. In the same degree as we are filled with pride by the others over the mighty strides forward of the human intellect, we are made ashamed by this because of man's unpardonable, if not criminal, neglect, in not engaging in a death-struggle with this bitterest of mankind's enemies, in not overcoming him.

The sadness of the
International Tu-
berculosis Exhi-
bition.

Reason enough there is for our being ashamed. In tuberculosis we have one of the oldest-known diseases, a disease recognized and described by Hippocrates, as far back as the fourth century before the present era,

Knowledge of
tuberculosis old.

a disease warned against ever since by the foremost physicians of every age and clime, a disease which, notwithstanding the startling disclosures that have since been made of its virulence and contagion, has been declared, by such scholars as Virchow and Koch and others, to be entirely preventable, and, at certain stages, and under certain conditions, absolutely curable.

And yet, with all this knowledge, an authority on this question tells us:

“It has been conservatively estimated that each year there are 1,095,000 deaths from this disease throughout the world, representing 3000 each day, two for every minute. In the United States there are, according to Mr. Frederic L. Hoffman, actuary of the Prudential Life Insurance Company, 150,000 deaths annually, at an average age of thirty-five years. . . . In terms of earning capacity the loss cannot be set down as less than \$240,000,000 annually, from this one disease in the United States alone. Tuberculosis kills as many people, young and old, each year as diptheria, croup, whooping-cough, scarlatina, measles, and typhoid fever taken altogether.”*

The whole earth is the field of its action; it is at home in every latitude. No land, no people is exempt. Its annual tribute is one-seventh of the deaths of the world. In England alone, it claims annually twice as many as were slain of the allied forces at the battle of Waterloo. The oldest races go down before it, even as the youngest. It has decimated the ranks of the Indians, and in the crowded ghettos, the Jews, who have outlived scores of other peoples, and who have surmounted persecutions and cruelties such as no other people has been able to endure, go down before this terror by the tens of thousands.

Of the stricken ones, thousands crowd our charities, tens of thousands of their survivors fill our eleemosynary institutions, and these, and thousands of others, transmit the disease to their children and children's children.

* *John Spargo: The Common Sense on the Milk Question*, Chapter v.

Thousands enter life cursed with this disease, tens of thousands of others contract it through want of fresh air, through lack of pure and sufficient food and of wholesome labor, through dissipation, exposure and intemperance.

And those who do not enter with the disease inbred, who do not contract it by any of the modes just named, may acquire it in a manner against which no one is immune. No one is safe against the sputum of the tuberculous patient. A patient, moderately advanced in the disease, will expectorate in twenty-four hours between two to four billions of the deadly bacilli. These bacilli, when the sputum becomes dry, are distributed as dust, and, through in-breathing, they find their way into our body, and also into that of cattle, whose milk we drink and whose meat we eat. In yet other ways may these bacilli find their way into our system. Infection has taken place through washing of clothes of tuberculous patients, through handling meats and hides of tuberculous cattles. As long as one filthy tenement remains in which the disease is suffered to breed, no palace, and be it never so hid by towering walls, can think itself free from danger. As long as cattle are permitted to breed the deadly poison in polluted stables, and to transfer it through their milk and meat to our homes, no family, no matter how large its wealth, is sure of escape.

Would you see one of the breeding-places of tuberculosis, visit one of the squalid districts of the poor. Note the enviroing dung-hills, and the sickening stench that rise from them. Enter one of the dark and slimy hall-ways, climb the filthy stairs, note the dingy one or two rooms, ill-lighted, ill-ventilated; note whole families engaged within them in all sorts of occupations, at all hours of day and night; note the half-decayed food on which they subsist, the tatters and rags that scarcely cover their nakedness, the vermin that infests their bedding; observe the choked

is spread.

Slums one of its breeding-places.

drains and the refuse matter lying about wherever you look or wherever you follow the scent of the stench—note these things and you will no longer wonder that tuberculosis mows down these unfortunates by the thousands.

And when you remember that some of the clothes made in some of these tenements, and holding imbedded within them the germs of the dread disease, find their way into the homes of the well-to-do, when you reflect that some of these unfortunates pass you in the streets, sit alongside of you in the cars, that some of them work in baker- and butcher-shops, in grocery stores, and the like, that some of them deliver goods in your homes, you will not be surprised if the affliction should suddenly come upon you or upon one of your dear ones, should suddenly darken the light of your homes, and extinguish the joy of your heart.

After more than two thousand years of acquaintance with the dread disease, what lesson should have been better learned

by now than that the homes of the poor should
Should long since
have been eradicated. become the special charge of the municipality,

that, even if but for selfish reasons, the poor should be provided with homes that are well-lighted, well-ventilated, well-equipped with means of cleanliness, and placed under such municipal surveillance as shall prevent, as far as possible, this dread disease from taking root? Or, better still, that the disease-breeding congestion of our poverty-stricken districts should be broken up, and that those for whom there is little or no room in the cities should be encouraged and aided by the municipality to settle upon farms, where they are needed and sought, where there is an abundance of light and room and wholesome work and nourishing food for all, where labor not only assures them life and health and competence, but also lessens the possibility of danger for those who remain behind.

Our so-called slums are not the only breeding-places of tuberculosis, nor even the worst. Its most fertile nursery is, far too often, the country cow-stable and the city milk-can. Mr. Spargo, whose work we have already cited, tells us:

Cow-stables and
milk-shops
breeding-places.

"The worst that was said about the conditions existing in the meat-packing houses of Chicago during recent exposures, does not excel, even if it equals, what might truthfully be said of the conditions which attend the production and distribution of the milk supply of our cities." *

In constantly increasing numbers, the mother's natural nourishment is supplanted by cow's milk in the feeding of babes. And the cow is not infrequently a sewer of poison, infecting the child with all manners of intestinal disorders, with endemic and fatal fevers, and, worst of all, with the tubercular bacillus. "One-third of all the babies born in this country die before they reach the age of five years," says our authority, and this slaughter of the innocents, counting its little victims by the thousands, takes place before our very eyes, year after year, and few are the hands that are raised to stop it, few are the voices that bid the carnage halt.

As shown before, cows, like human beings, are infected by the in-breathing of the desicated, dust-distributed bacilli of the sputum of tuberculous patients. With the aid of tuberculin its presence in cattle is easily detected, but the unscrupulous farmer finds it more profitable not to know whether his cows are infected or not. Even where inspections are legally required, the tests, in far too many instances, we are told, are either inefficiently made, or not made at all.

There are farmers who breed the infections themselves. There are cow-stables—and I have seen some of these myself—whose filth equals and exceeds any we might encounter even in the vilest slums. There are

How milk is in-
fected.

stables in which cows are allowed literally to wallow in dirt,

* Chapter iv.

cows whose hoofs and tails rot off from disease, cows that are swill-fed, cows that have the manure piled around them in heaps higher than themselves, cows that are kept for years in stables so dark and so shut in, that a ray of light or a breath of fresh air can only with greatest difficulty reach them. And it scarcely needs our adding that a farmer, who can thus house and feed his cattle, will exhibit little concern about the cow being cleansed, about his hands being washed, about the cans being scoured and sterilized, before milking. From the rather incomplete statistics at command, it would appear that the statement that one-fifth of our cattle suffer from tuberculosis would be a conservative estimate.

Follow the milk, as it passes from such a stable as we have described to one of the slum-districts in the city. There dirt is added to dirt, filth heaped upon filth. How babes are slain by it. Dirty ladles in dirty hands empty it into dirty cans and pitchers. Brought into the home, it is boiled in dirty pots, emptied into dirty bottles, and sucked through filthy nipples. You can easily imagine the rest. Is it a wonder that in the districts of the poor infant mortality should be as large as it is? Is it a wonder that the British Royal Commission, appointed to inquire into "The Effect of Food derived from Tuberculous Animals upon Human Health," should have reported that "The largest part of the tuberculosis which man obtains through his food is by means of milk containing tuberculous matter?" Is it a wonder that the *British Medical Journal* should have referred to some of the milk sold in the market as "*Pus as Beverage*," or that some one should have suggested as a fitting epitaph on the stones marking the graves of thousands of babes: "*Slain by Foul Milk*."

It is with genuine pleasure that one turns from this dark picture to the few bright glints of light that come to us from various quarters, and that are prophetic of a brighter day soon to dawn. The helpless suffer-

A remedy offered.

ings of the little ones, the blasted careers and untimely deaths of tens of thousands of youths and maidens, plucked in the very blossom of their years, has appealed powerfully to a few feeling hearts, and has moved a few hands to work and save. One need but look at THE NATHAN STRAUS EXHIBIT, on the second floor of the Exhibition Hall, to see what can be done where there is a heart to feel, and a hand ready to give and to do, and what might be done, in the way of saving life and usefulness, were municipalities, on a much larger scale, with their larger power and larger means, to do what an individual has done for the past sixteen years, single-handed, and at an enormous personal cost.

Knowing that babes depend wholly on milk for their subsistence, knowing that the milk that reaches the slum districts is unclean, unhealthy, and frequently infected with the bacilli of tuberculosis, knowing also that Nathan Straus and his philanthropy. by pasteurization, that is, by heating milk to a temperature of 140° F. for twenty minutes in a closed vessel, and then cooling it rapidly, the germs of tuberculosis, typhoid, diptheria, dysentery, cholera infantum, etc., can be destroyed, without injuring the nutritive element of the milk, knowing these things, Nathan Straus entered, in the year 1893, upon his crusade against the bitterest foe of the tenement districts, by establishing pasteurization plants in the midst of them, by selling pure, pasteurized milk, in germ-free bottles, modified to suit the needs of babies of different ages and of different degrees of health, at a sum less than cost, namely at the rate of 5 cents a quart, cheaper than was being paid for infected and watered milk. Besides this, he began providing tens of thousands of bottles free to the poor on requisitions of charity-workers and physicians. In addition, he issued leaflets to the mothers, acquainting them with the dangers that lurk in milk, instructing them how to use it, how to clean and keep the bottles,

even putting upon the market a cheap but effective pasteurizer to enable mothers to do the sterilizing at home.

That the poor have not been slow to avail themselves of the magnificent Straus philanthropy may best be seen from the fact that in the city of New York alone there were used of his milk, during the past year, over 4,000,000 bottles. Nearly one and a half million glasses of milk, at one cent a glass, were sold to children and adults at the public stands in the streets, in the parks and on the recreation piers. These figures mean that nearly 2,500 babies have been fed daily on milk from which the danger of infection was removed, and that over 15,000 glasses of pasteurized milk have been consumed daily at the public stands, chiefly by children. The output of the Straus milk stations in the city of New York, during the past sixteen years has been nearly twenty-three millions of bottles and eleven and a half million glasses of pasteurized milk.

And the result in lessening the infantile death-rate of the city of New York is astounding. During the ten years,

1894-1904 there was an annual saving of 6982
Lowers infantile death-rate by one-half. lives, due chiefly to the Straus milk-stations.

To cite Mr. Straus himself: "At the rate of mortality which prevailed in 1892, the number of deaths in June, July and August 1906 would have been 9743 instead of 4426 as it actually was, a saving of more than 50% of the young lives formerly sacrificed in those three hot months." Probably the most remarkable showing was made at Randall's Island, where one of New York's Infant Asylum is situated. The annual death-rate at that institution had been nearly one-half, so high, indeed, that it became a matter of public condemnation. In 1898, Mr. Straus obtained permission to introduce in that institution his pasteurization plant. The result was almost instantaneous. The death-rate for 1897 had been

44%; in 1898 it was less than 20%, a reduction of more than one-half.

From the slum-districts of New York he has extended his philanthropy to those of other cities, among them those of our own, and from our country to other countries. Extends his philanthropy. And the result has everywhere been the same. Everywhere he has reduced the infantile death rate to one-half. Paris honored him with a gold medal, so did the Duchess of Baden. The University of Heidelberg invited him to tell of his work before the faculty and students of that ancient and learned institution, and highly commended his noble and munificent philanthropy. At the International Tuberculosis Exhibition at Washington, our Government paid him a special tribute of honor.

He has deserved all these honors, and more of them. Considering the lives he has saved and is saving, I know of none more deserving of the *Noble Prize* of Sweden Deserves the Noble Prize. than Nathan Straus. Considering that monuments are raised to those, who, upon the battle-field, rout an enemy or save an army, what monument could adequately speak of a nation's appreciation of one, who annually beats back the onslaughts of one of the fiercest foes of mankind, in districts in which his deadly sway had been unopposed before the advent of Mr. Nathan Straus?

But Mr. Straus does not care for honors; he has not labored for them. He has but one ambition, to see the little innocents rescued from the hand of a deadly yet conquerable enemy. Having seen a child of his own sacrificed to that Moloch, having personally experienced the pang of loss, he wants to see that pang spared to others, as far as it lies in human power, especially to those who cannot help themselves. Having demonstrated that tuberculosis can be controlled, even conquered, he

The philanthropy of the individual should become the duty of the Nation.

wants to see the municipality, the state and the nation do what, for obvious reasons, cannot be done by an individual. He has expended a fortune on his philanthropy, and is willing to expend more. But the problem is too vast for him to cope with alone. A nation, that has tens of millions to expend on its army and navy to protect itself against an invasion of a possible future enemy, ought surely to adopt means of defense against a foe, who is not only one of the deadliest that man has ever encountered, but who also has long since crossed our borders, and has established himself in every city, town and hamlet of our land. Mr. Nathan Straus has shown the way; it is now the duty of the Nation to follow.

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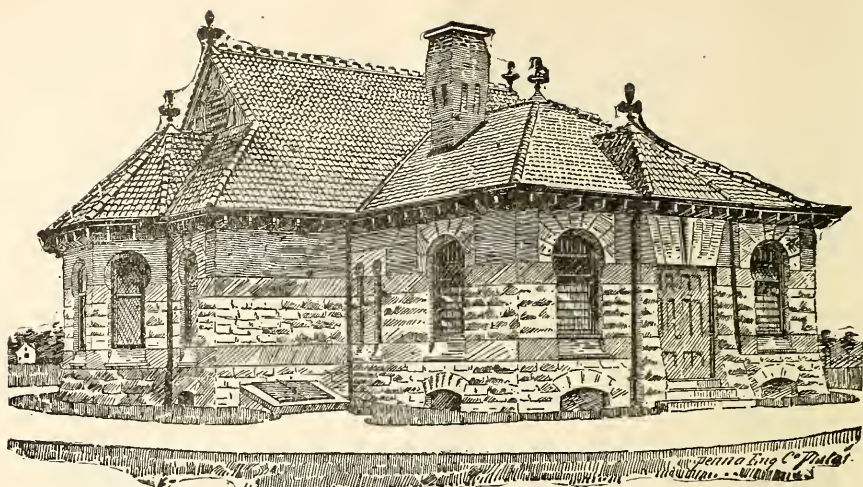
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